

✓ Measures of Youth Assets

Healthy development depends not only on avoiding harmful behavior, but on strengthening the sources of positive influence in our lives. This section asks students about the grades they receive in school, how often their parents talk to them about school, how often they are involved in clubs or organizations, how often they volunteer their time helping their community, their perception about students' role in deciding what happens in school, and their perception of how they are valued by their communities.

- **Grades in School:** Above-average school performance is viewed as one of many developmental assets (i.e., factors promoting positive development) for youth. Studies have shown that students who get higher grades in school are less likely to use cigarettes, alcohol, or marijuana, and are more likely to postpone sexual intercourse.⁷⁷ In 2003, 73 percent of 8-12th graders in Vermont reported that their school performance was above average.⁷⁸
- **Parents Involvement in School:** One of the strongest predictors of students' success in school is the extent to which their parents stay involved with their schoolwork—asking about academic progress, attending teacher conferences, and so on. In addition, a national study of adolescent health found that youth who reported a “connectedness” to their parents/family and school were the least likely to engage in risky behaviors. Parental expectations regarding school achievement were also associated with lower levels of risk behaviors.⁷⁷ Only 27 percent of 6th to 12th grade students surveyed across the United States reported that their parents are involved in helping them succeed in school.⁷⁹
- **Participation in youth programs and service to community:** Research shows that involvement in constructive, supervised extra-curricular activities is associated with reduced likelihood of involvement in risky behaviors such as school failure, drug use, and crime.⁸⁰ In addition, evidence is emerging that students who participate in such activities are also more likely to engage in other “thriving” behaviors.⁸¹
- **Youth as resources:** Youth are not simply objects of adult efforts to modify their behaviors. Rather, if given the opportunities, they can make significant contributions to their families, schools, and communities. Adolescents, especially, need to exercise decision-making power in as many settings as is practical, so that they can develop into competent adults. Schools are a natural setting for youth to share in decisions that affect their lives.

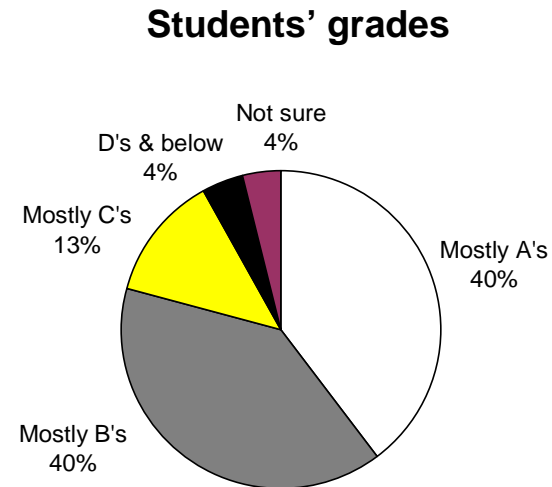
✓ Measures of Youth Assets

- **Youth valued by their community:** It stands to reason that young people respond positively when they perceive they are valued by others in their community. In 2003, 42 percent of 8-12th graders in Vermont reported feeling valued in their community.⁷⁸

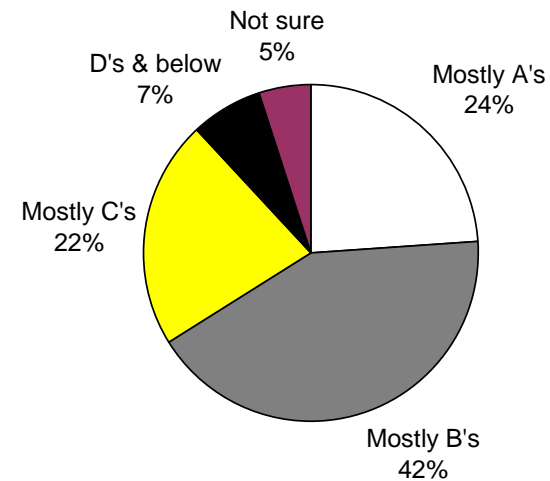
■ Measures of Youth Assets

- **The majority of students receive above average grades.** Overall, 73 percent of students reported receiving B's and above.
- **Females receive higher grades than males.** Forty percent of female students reported receiving mostly A's, compared to 24 percent of male students.

FEMALES



MALES

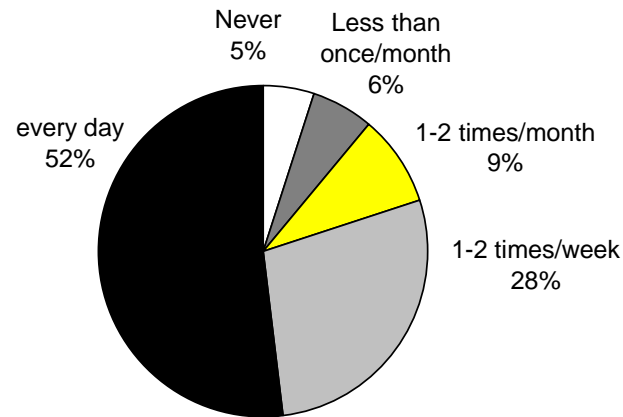


■ Measures of Youth Assets

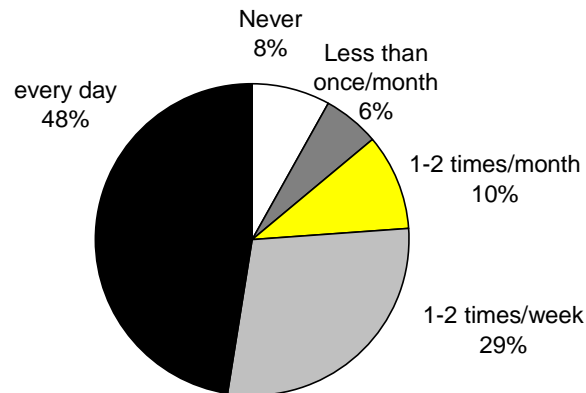
- **Over three-fourths (78%) of students' parents talk with them about school weekly or more often.** Overall, 50 percent of students reported that their parents talked with them daily about school and 28 percent talked with them once or twice a week.
- **Some parents rarely or never talk with their children about school.** Overall, 7 percent of students reported that their parents never talk with them about school and 6 percent reported that their parents talk with them about school less than once a month.

How often does one of your parents talk with you about what you are doing in school?

FEMALES



MALES



■ Measures of Youth Assets

- **Three out of 10 (31%) students participate in clubs outside of school.** No difference was seen among grades, but slightly more females than males participated in clubs or organizations outside of school (35% vs 27%).

PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH PROGRAMS									
	GRADE					GENDER		ALL	
	8	9	10	11	12	F	M	2005	2003
Percent of students who:									
Spend 1 or more hours per week in clubs/organizations outside of school (not including sports)	32	31	31	30	31	35	27	31	28
Spend 3 or more hours per week in clubs/organizations outside of school (not including sports)	8	8	8	8	9	9	7	8	12

■ Measures of Youth Assets

- **Almost half (46%) of Vermont students volunteer their time.** No difference was seen across grades, but more females than males participated in clubs or organizations outside of school (49% vs 43%).

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY									
	GRADE					GENDER		ALL	
	8	9	10	11	12	F	M	2005	2003
Percent of students who:									
Spend 1 or more hours per week volunteering their time to make their community a better place to live	46	46	43	45	51	49	43	46	45
Spend 3 or more hours per week volunteering their time to help others make their community a better place to live	8	8	8	9	10	10	7	9	13

■ Measures of Youth Assets

- **Almost half (46%) of students report that students help decide what goes on at their school.** No significant difference was seen across grades or sex.
- **Almost half (45%) of students feel valued by their community.** No significant difference was seen across grades or sex.
- **Almost nine out of ten (88%) students have an adult in their life they can turn to for help and advice.** No significant difference was seen across grades or sex.

YOUTH VALUED BY THEIR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY									
	GRADE					GENDER		ALL	
	8	9	10	11	12	F	M	2005	2003
Percent of students who agree with the following statements:									
Students help decide what goes on in my school	44	48	48	42	48	46	46	46	46
In my community, I feel like I matter to people	45	42	44	43	49	43	46	45	42

MENTOR									
	GRADE					GENDER		ALL	
	8	9	10	11	12	F	M	2005	2003
Percent of students who have an adult in their life they can usually turn to for help and advice	90	88	87	89	90	90	88	88	NA

References

1. Cotton N.U., Resnick, J., Browne, D.C. Martin, S.L., McCarraher, D.R., Woods, J. Aggression and fighting behavior among African-American adolescents: Individual and family factors. American Journal of Public Health 84:618-622, 1994.
2. Luckenbill, D.F. Criminal homicide as a situated transaction. Social Problems 25:176-186, 1977.
3. Kaufman, P., Chen, X., Choy, S.P., Peter, K., Ruddy, S.A., Miller, A.K., Fleury, J.K., Chandler, K.A., Planty, M.G., Rand, M.R. Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2001. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. NCES 2002-113/NCJ-190075. Washington, DC:2001.
4. Avery-Leaf, S., Cascardi, M., O'Leary, K.D., Cano, A. Efficacy of a dating violence prevention program on attitudes justifying aggression. Journal of Adolescent Health 21:11-17, 1997.
5. Davis, T.C., Peck, G.Q., Storment, J.M. Acquaintance rape and the high school student. Journal of Adolescent Health 14:222-224, 1993.
6. Plichta, S.B., Falik, M. Prevalence of violence and its implications for women's health. Women's Health Issues 11(3):244-258, 2001.
7. Ackard, D.M., Neumark-Sztainer, D. Date violence and date rape among adolescents: Association with disordered eating behaviors and psychological health. Child Abuse & Neglect 26(5):455-473, 2002.
8. Anderson, R.N., Deaths: Leading Causes for 1999. National Vital Statistics Reports 49:1-88, 2001.
9. Cook, P.J., Ludwig, J. The costs of gun violence against children. Future of Children 12(2):87-99, 2002.
10. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (producer). 2004. [On-line] Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/default.htm>.
11. Juvonen, J., Graham, S., Schuster, M.A. Bullying among young adolescents: The strong, the weak, and the troubled. Pediatrics 112(6): 1231-1237, 2003.
12. Spivak, H., Prothrow-Stith, D. The need to address bullying-an important component of violence prevention. JAMA 285:2131-2132, 2001.
13. Nansel, T.R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R.S., Ruan, J., Simons-Morton, B., Scheidt, P. Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and association with psychological adjustment. JAMA 285:2094-2100, 2001.
14. Vermont Department of Health. Vital Statistics, 2002
15. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Traffic Safety Facts 2002: Occupant Protection. Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Transportation, 2002.

16. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Injury-control recommendations: Bicycle helmets. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 44:1-17, 1995.
17. Sosin, D.M., Sacks, J.J., and Webb, K.W. Pediatric head injuries and deaths from bicycling in the United States. Pediatrics 98:868-870, 1996.
18. Rivara, F.P. Traumatic deaths of children in the United States: currently available prevention strategies. Pediatrics 75: 456-62, 1985.
19. Thompson, D.C., Nunn, M.W., Thompson, R.S., Rivara, F.P. Effectiveness of bicycle safety helmets in preventing serious facial injury. Journal of the American Medical Association 276:1968-1973, 1989.
20. Thompson, D.C., Rivara, F.P., Thompson, R.S. Effectiveness of bicycle safety helmets in preventing head injuries: a case controlled study. Journal of the American Medical Association 276:1968-1973, 1996.
21. Thompson, R.S., Rivara, F.P., Thompson, D.C. A case control study of the effectiveness of bicycle safety helmets. New England Journal of Medicine 320:1361-1367, 1989.
22. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Traffic Safety Facts 2003: Alcohol. Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Transportation, 2004.
23. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Economic Cost to Society of Motor Vehicle Accidents. Technical Report DOT HS 809-195. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, 1987.
24. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem. Institute for Health Policy, Brandeis University, 1993.
25. Public Health Service. Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives--Full Report, With Commentary. DHHS Pub. No. (PHS)91-50212. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1991.
26. Dunn, M.S., Bartee, R.T., Perko, M.A. Self-reported alcohol use and sexual behaviors of adolescents. Psychological Reports 92(1):339-38, 2003.
27. Everett, S.A., Oeltmann, J., Wilson, T.W., Brener, N.D., Hill, C.V. Binge drinking among undergraduate college students in the United States: Implications for other substance use. Journal of American College Health 50(1):33-38, 2001.
28. Johnson, P., Boles, S.M., Vaughan, R., Herbert, D. The co-occurrence of smoking and binge drinking in adolescence. Addictive Behaviors 25(5):779-783, 2000.
29. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: Office on Smoking and Health, 2004.
30. Mokdad, A.H., Marks, J.S., Stroup, D.F., Gerberding, J.L. Actual causes of death in the United States. Journal of the American Medical Association 291(10):1238-1245.
31. Everett, S.A., Malarcher, A.M., Sharp, D.J., Husten, C.G., Giovino, G.A. Relationship between cigarette, smokeless tobacco, and cigar use, and other health risk behaviors among U.S. high school students. Journal of School Health 70(6):234-240, 2000.

32. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 2003. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 53:SS-2, 1-96, 2004.
33. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Monograph 9: Cigars - Health Effects and Trends. 1998; (98-4302:217).
34. Kopstein, A. Tobacco Use in America: Findings from the 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. Rockville, M.D. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Analytic Series A-15 (SMA 02-3622), 2001.
35. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oral Cancer: Deadly to Ignore. Fact sheet on oral cancer, 2002; [online] Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/factsheets/oc-facts.html>.
36. Do It Now Foundation. FastFacts-Marijuana, 1995.
37. Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), April 2002.
38. Do It Now Foundation. FastFacts-Inhalants, 1995.
39. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Summary of findings from the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) Series: H-13, DHHS Publication NO. SMA 01-3549. Rockville, MD, 2001.
40. Blanken, A.J. Measuring use of alcohol and other drugs among adolescents. Public Health Reports 108(1):25-30, 1993.
41. Johnston, L., O'Malley, P., and Bachman, J. National Survey Results on Drug Use From the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1995, Volume I: Secondary School Students. Rockville, MD: National Institute of Drug Abuse, 1996.
42. Developmental Research Programs. Communities That Care Planning Kit. Seattle, Washington, 1996.
43. Abma, J.C., Sonenstein, F.L. Sexual activity and contraceptive practices among teenagers in the United States, 1998 and 1995. National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Statistics Series 23:1-26, 2001.
44. Morris, L., Warren, C.W., and Aral, S.O. Measuring adolescent sexual behaviors and related health outcomes. Public Health Reports 108(1):31-36, 1993.
45. Hofferth, S.L. and Hayes, C.D. (eds.). Risking the Future: Adolescent Sexuality, Pregnancy, and Childbearing. Panel on Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing, Committee on Child Development Research and Public Policy, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1987.
46. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends, 1998.
47. Vermont Department of Health. Vermont Quarterly HIV/AIDS Report, January 2003.
48. Ventura, S.J., Mosher, W.D., Curtain, S.A., and Abma, J.C. Trends in pregnancy rates for the United States, 1976-97: An update. National Vital Statistics Reports 49(4):1-12, 2001.

49. Martin, J.A., Park, M.M., and Sutton, P.D. Births: Preliminary data for 2001. National Vital Statistics Reports 50(10):1-20, 2002.
50. Vermont Agency of Human Services. The Social Well-Being of Vermonters, 2005.
51. The Center for Population Options. Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth: At Risk and Underserved, 1992.
52. Hedley, A.A., Ogden, C.L., Johnson, C.L., Carroll, M.D., Curtin, L.R. Flegal, K.M. Prevalence of overweight and obesity among US children, adolescents, and adults, 1999-2002. JAMA 291(23):2847-2850, 2004.
53. Wright, C.M., Parker, L., Lamont, D., Craft, A.W. Implications of childhood obesity for adult health: findings from thousand families cohort study. British Medical Journal 323:1280-1284, 2001.
54. Neumark-Sztainer, D., Hannan, P.J. Weight-related behaviors among adolescent girls and boys. Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine 154:569-577, 2000.
55. Herzog, D. and Copeland, P. Eating disorders. New England Journal of Medicine 313:295-303, 1985.
56. Mitchell, J. and Eckert, E. Scope and significance of eating disorders. Journal of Consulting Clinical Psychology 55:628-634, 1987.
57. Neumark-Sztainer, D., Story, M., Hannan, P.J., Perry, C.L., Irving, L.M. Weight-related concerns and behaviors among overweight and nonoverweight adolescents: Implications for preventing weight-related disorders. Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine 156(2):1-21, 2002.
58. American Psychiatric Association. Practice guideline for the treatment of patients with eating disorders (revision). American Journal of Psychiatry 154(1): 1-39, 2004.
59. Key, T., Schatzkin, A., Willet, W.C., Allen, N.E., Spencer, E.A., Travis, R.C. Diet, nutrition, and the prevention of cancer. Public Health Nutrition 7(1A):187-200, 2004.
60. National Cancer Institute. 5 A Day for Better Health Program. NIH Publication 01-5019. 2001.
61. Ness, A.R., Powles, J.W. Fruits and vegetables and cardiovascular disease: A review. International Journal of Epidemiology 26(1):1-13, 1997.
62. Terry, P., Terry, J.B., Wolk, A. Fruit and vegetable consumption in the prevention of cancer: An update. Journal of Internal Medicine 250(4):280-290, 1998.
63. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Research Service. Unpublished data from the 1994-1995 Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals. 1998.
64. Van Duyn, M.A., Pivonka, E. Overview of the health benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption for the dietetics professional: selected literature. Journal of the American Dieticians Association 100(2):1511-1521, 2000.
65. Weaver, C.M., Peacock, M., Johnston, C.C. Adolescent nutrition in the prevention of postmenopausal osteoporosis. Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism 84(6): 1839-1843, 1999.

66. National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Unpublished data from the 1988-94 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. May 1998.
67. NIH Consensus Development on Optimal Calcium Intake. Optimal calcium intake. Journal of the American Medical Association 272: 1942-1948, 1994.
68. US Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 1996.
69. McKenzie, K.L. Nader, P.R., Strikmiller, P.K., Yang, M., Stone, E.J., Perry, C.L., Taylor, W.C., Epping, J.M., Feldman, H.A., Luepker, R.V., and Kelder, S.H. School physical education: Effect of the Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health. Preventive Medicine 25:423-431, 1996.
70. McKenzie, K.L., Li, D.L., Derby, C.A., Webber, L.S., Luepker, R.V., Cribb, P. Maintenance of effects of the CATCH Physical Education Program: Results from the CATCH-ON Study. Health Education & Behavior 30(4):447-462, 2003.
71. Sallis, J.F., McKenzie, T.L., Alcaraz, J.E., Kolody, B., Faucette, N., and Hovell, M.F. The effects of a 2 year physical education program (SPARK) on physical activity and fitness in elementary school students. American Journal of Public Health 87:1328-1334, 1997.
72. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidelines for school and community programs to promote lifelong physical activity among young people. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 46 (No. RR-6):1-36, 1997.
73. Crespo, C.J., Smith, E., Troian, R.P., Bartlett, S.J., Macera, C.A., Anderson, R.E. Television watching, energy intake, and obesity in US children. Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine 155:360-365, 2001.
74. Kaur, H., Choi, W.S., Mayo, M.S., Harris, K.J. Duration of television watching is associated with increased body mass index. Journal of Pediatrics 143(4):506-511, 2003.
75. Pearl, D. Television and behavior: Ten years of scientific progress and implications for the eighties. Vol. 1. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, publication no. ADM 82-1195, 1982.
76. Huesmann, L.R. and Eron, L.D. Cognitive processes and the persistence of aggressive behavior. Aggressive Behavior 10:243-251, 1984.
77. Resnick, M.D., Bearman, P.S., Blum, R.W., et al. Protecting adolescents from harm. Findings from the national longitudinal study on adolescent health. JAMA 278(10):823-832, 1997.
78. Vermont Department of Health and Vermont Department of Education. The 2003 Vermont youth risk behavior survey-Statewide report, 2003.
79. Search Institute. Healthy Communities - Healthy Youth, 1996.
80. Scales, P. C., & Leffert, N. Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific research on adolescent development. Minneapolis: 1999.
81. Scales, P. C., Benson, P. L., Leffert, N, and Blyth, D.A. Contribution of developmental assets to prediction of thriving among adolescents. Applied Developmental Science 4(1):27-46, 2000.